SUPPLEMENT TO ST. JOHNSBURY CALEDONIAN

St. Johnsbury, Vt., Wednesday, June 8, 1910.



"Haven't I?"

Again she looked at him merrily.

"Of course I can't afford to be harsh with my rescuer. Perhaps"-in the same tone-"you really did save my life! Have you ever really saved any one-any one else, shall I say-you, who are so strong?"

A spasm of pain passed over his face. His look, however, was not for her, and the girl's eyes, too, had now become suddenly set afar. Was she thinking of another scene, some one her own words conjured to mind? Her mood seemed to gain in seriousness. She also became very quiet, and so, almost in silence, they went on to the entrance, down the street to her home. "Au revoir, and thank you."

"Goodby-at least for the present," he added. "I am leaving London," abruptly.

"Leaving! To be gone long?" "It is difficult to say. Perhaps."

"But-you must have decided suddenly?" "Yes."

"While we have been riding home? Is it-is it serious?"

"A little." "Men make so much of business nowadays," she observed. "It-it always seems serious, I suppose. We-we are moving into the country in a few weeks. Shall I-shall we see you before then?"

"To my regret, I am afraid not."

"And after"-in a voice matter of subject that had partly passed from fact-"I think aunt has put you down for July. A house party. I don't recall the exact dates. You will come?" "Shall we say circumstances permit-

"Certainly," a little stiffly, "circumstances permitting." She gave him her hand. "Au revoir, or goodby if you prefer it." He held the little gloved fingers, let them drop.

"Good luck in your business," she found herself saying, half gayly, half ironically.

He answered hoarsely somethingwhat?-rode off. With color flaming high, the girl looked after him until Lord Ronsdale's horse, clattering near, caused her to turn quickly.

CHAPTER VIII.

A CONFERENCE AND A DISCOVERY.

HE bookworms' row, hardly a street, more a short cut passage between two important thoroughfares, had through the course of many years exercised a subtle fascination for pedant, pedagogue or itinerant litterateur. Higher, above the little shops, small rooms, reached by rickety stairways, offered quiet corners for divers and sundry gentlemen whose occupations called for discreet and retired nooks.

In one of these places, described on the door as "a private, confidential inquiry office," sat on the morning following John Steele's ride in the park a little man with ferret-like eyes at a dusty desk near a dusty window. He did not seem to be very busy-was engaged at the moment in drawing meaningless cabalistic signs on a piece of paper when a step in the hallway and a low tapping at the door caused him to throw down his pen and straighten expectantly. A client perhaps-a woman-no, a man! With momentary surprise he gazed on the delicately chiseled features of his caller, a gentleman faultlessly dressed and wearing a spring flower in his "Mr. Gillett?" The visitor's glance

veiled an expression of restlessness. His face, although mask-like, was tinted with a faint flush. The police agent at once rose. "The

same, sir, at your service. I-but I beg your pardon. Unless I am mistaken-"Yes, a number of years ago on the

Lord Nelson," said the caller in a hard. matter of fact tone. "We were fellow passengers on her until"-"We became fellow occupants of one

of her small boats. An aging experience! But won't you," with that deference for rank and position those of his type are pleased to assume, "honor me by being seated, Lord Ronsdale?"

The visitor looked at the table, the window, anywhere save at the proprietor of the establishment, then said, "I saw by an advertisement in the morning papers that you had severed your connection with the force and had opened this-a private consultation bureau."

"Quite so." The other looked momentarily embarrassed. "A little friction-account of some case-unreliable witness that got tangled up They un fects and details'-which." closing the

dertook to criticise me after all my faithful service"- He broke off. "Besides, the time comes when a man realizes he can do better for himself by himself. I am now devoting myself to a small but strictly high class," with an accent, "clientele."

Lord Ronsdale considered. When he caress the ear. "You know John in?" Steele, of course?"

The ferret eyes snapped. "That I do, your lordship. What of him?"

Nelson, Gillett?" "She isn't a boat one's apt to forget after what happened, your lordship," was the answer. "And, if I do say it, her passengers were of the kind to leave pleasant recollections," the police agent diplomatically added.

"Her passengers?" The caller's thin lips compressed. "Among them, if memory serves me, were a number of convicts?"

"A job lot of precious jailbirds that I was acting as escort of, your lordship." "But who never reached Australia!"

quickly. "Drowned-every mother's son of them?' observed Mr. Gillett, with a

possible trace of complacency. The visitor's white hand held closer the head of his cane, "Were they all drowned, by the way?" he observed as if seeking casual information on some

"No doubt of it. They were not released until the second boat got off, and then there was no time to get overboard the life rafts."

"True." Lord Ronsdale gazed absently out of the window. "Recall the day on that memorable voyage you were telling us about them-who they were, and so on?

"One, if I recall rightly," went on Lord Rousdale, "was known as-let me see"-the elastic stick described a sharper curve-"the Frisco Pet? Remember?" He bent slightly nearer.

"That I do. Not likely to forget him. Unmanageable; one of the worst. Was transported for life, with death as a penalty for returning." A slight sound came from the nobleman's throat.

Lord Ronsdale's eyes half closed. "A heavy fisted, shapely brute, with muscles like steel, but ignorant." He lingered on the word. Then his glance suddenly lifted. "Had something on his arm: recall noticing it while the

bout was on!" Mr. Gillett, with a knowing expression, rose, took a volume from a bookcase and opened it.

"The 'something' you speak of, my lord," he observed proudly, "should be here. I will show it that you may appreciate my system, the method I have of gathering and tabulating data. You will find an encyclopedia of information in that bookcase. All that Scotland Yard has and perhaps a little besides. To illustrate, here's his case." Gillett's fingers moved lightly over the page. "Testimony of Dandy Joe, downstairs at the time with landlady who kept the house where the crime was committed. Heard Frisco Pet, who had been drinking, come in, go upstairs, as they supposed, to his own room; shortly after loud voices; pistol shot. Landlady and Joe found woman, Amy Gerard, dead in shabby little sitting room. Pet, the worse for liquor, in dazed condition at a table, head in his hands. Testimony of Joe corroborated by landlady. She swore no one had been in house except parties here mentioned, all lodgers.

"'Private mem .- House in bad neighborhood, near the Adelphi catacombs. Son of landlady, red headed giant, also one time prizefighter, used to live here. The Pet's last fight in the ring was with him. Later Tom took to the road. Was wanted by the police at the time of the crime for some brutal highway work'- But," breaking off, "I am wearying your lordship. Here are what I was especially looking for, the markings on the arm of the Frisco Pet. Perhaps, however, your lordship doesn't care to listen further."

"Go on!" The words broke sharply from the visitor's lips; then he gave a metallic laugh. "I am interested in this wonderful system of yours." Mr. Gillett read slowly, "'On the

right arm of the Frisco Pet, just below the elbow, appears the figure of a man in sparring attitude done in sailor's tattooing; about the waist a flag, the stars and stripes in their accustomed colors crudely drawn, but not to be mistaken by noting following de-

book, "I won't read."

His lordship's head had turned. "A good system," he remarked after an interval. "But my purpose-the purpose of my visit-I-we have wandered quite from that. Let us, I beg of you, talk business. I believe"-the visitor moistened his lips-"I believe I spoke his voice was low, but it did not | mentioned-John Steele when I came

"I am all attention, your lordship." Mr. Gillett's manner was keen, energetic. If he felt surprise he suppressed it. "Good! Your lordship's business "Ever think much about the Lord concerns John Steele."

"For reasons that need not be mentioned I want to find out all I can about him. That, I believe, is the sort of work you undertake. The terms for your services can be arranged later. It is unnecessary to say you will be well paid. I assume you can command competent and trustworthy help; that you have agents perhaps in other countries?"

Mr. Gillett nodded. "If your lordship would give me some idea of the scope of the inquiry"-

The long fingers opened, then closed tightly.

"In the first place, you are to ascertain where John Steele was before he came to England, how he got there, what he did. Naturally if he has lived in a faraway port you would seek to know the ship that brought him there, the names of the captain and the crew."

"It shall be done, your lordship," replied the other quickly. "I shall embark in the matter with great zest and, I may add, interest. If I might be so bold, may I ask, does your lordship expect to find anything that would-ahem-cast any reflection on the high standing John Steele is building up for himself in the community

A shadow seemed to darken the mask-like features of the visitor. His gaze at once glittering, vaguely questioning, was fastened on the wall; then slowly without answering he got up. "Surmises are not to enter into this matter," he said shortly. "It is facts I want-facts."

"And your lordship shall have them. The case appears simple, not hard to get at the bottom of." An odd expression shone from the visitor's eyes. "Which reminds me he has left town," added Gillett.

"Left town!" Lord Ronsdale wheeled abruptly. "You mean"-

"For a little trip to the continent, I should imagine; heard of it because he got some unimportant court matter put over."

"Gone away!" The nobleman lifted a hand to his brow. "Last night." "It was only yesterday morning

was riding with him."

"And he didn't mention the matter?" The visitor did not answer. "Why should he have gone away?" he murmured, half aloud. "Was it because"-He walked to the door, at the threshold stopped and looked back. "You might begin your inquiry by learning all you can about this little trip," he

suggested. And he departed. Several months went by, and John Steele saw nothing further, although he heard often, of Miss Jocelyn Wray. His business to the continent, whatever its nature, had seemed sufficiently important to authorize from him to her in due process of time a short, per-Tunctory message regretting his inability to present himself at the appointed hour at Strathorn House.

A number of supposedly prospective clients had called to ask for him at his office during his sojourn on the other side of the channel. That was to have been expected. But one or two of these by dint of flattery or possibly silver lined persuasion had succeeded in gaining access to his chambers. "I should like to have a look into

John Steele's library. I've heard it's worth while," one had observed to the butler at the door. "Only a bit of a peep around!" His manner of putting his desire, supplemented by a half crown, left the butler no alternative save to comply with the request until the "peep around" began to develop into more than cursory examination, when his sense of propriety became outraged and the visitor's welcome was cut short. "He was that curlous a regular

Paul Pry," explained the servant to John Steele in narrating the incident on the latter's return to London.

been handling of them, too, and when I showed him the door-trusting I did right, sir, even if he should happen to be a client-he asked more questions six feet three, with a shock of red before going."

"What questions?" quietly. "Personal-like. But I put a stop to

For a few moments John Steele said nothing. His face on his reappearance in London had looked slightly paler, more set and determined, not unlike that of a man who, strongly assailed, has made up his mind to do battle to paused, remained stock still. the end. With whom? How many?

"You will admit no one to my chambers during my absence in the future," said Steele at length to the man sternly, "no one, you understand, under any pretext whatever, even"-a flicker of grim humor in the deep eyes-"if

The butler returned a subdued answer, and John Steele, after a moment's thought, stepped to a large safe in the corner and, applying a somewhat elaborate combination, swung can go, for all of me." open the door. Taking from a compartment a bundle of papers carefully rolled, he unfastened the tape, spread them on a table and examined them, one after the other. They made a the white pages in bold regular script | knows too much, and"appeared the name of a woman. Her life lay before him, the various stages of an odd and erratic career-at a cabaret at Montmartre, at a casino in the Paris bohemian quarter, in Londonat a variety hall of amusement. And afterward-wastrel nomad! Throughout the writing in many of the documents another name, too, a titled name, a man's, often came and went, flitted elusively from leaf to leaf.

The reader looked at this name, wrote a page or two and inserted them. But his task seemed to afford him little satisfaction. His face wore an expression not remote from discouragement. None knew better than he the actual value, for his purpose, of the material before him-the chaff, froth, bubble of the case! Almost contemptuously he regarded it. Had he sought the unattainable?

He drew himself up suddenly as if to shake off momentary doubt or depression. Replacing his documents in the safe and locking it, he walked into a room adjoining. In a bare, square place on the wall hung foils and broadswords, and the only furnishings were the conventional appointments of a home gymnasium.

Here, having doffed his street clothes and assumed the scant costume of the athlete, for an hour or more he exercised vigorously, every muscle responding to its task with an untiring ease that told of a perfect system of training, which proved of service to him and his well being, for one night not long thereafter he was called upon to defend himself from a number of footpads who set upon him.

The episode occurred in his own street near a corner, where the shadows were black at an hour when the narrow way seemed silent and deserted. For a block or more footfalls had sounded behind him, now quickening, then becoming more deliberate, in unison with his own steps, as from time to time he purposely altered his pace. Once he had stopped, whereupon they, too, had paused. John Steele seemed oblivious. He

moved into a doorway and, drawing from his pocket a cigar, unconcernedly lighted a match. The fellows looked at him, at the tiny flame. It flickered and went out. They hesitated. He felt in his pocket, giving them time to move by. They did not do so. In a moment the others from the main highway would join them. As if disappointed in not finding what he sought, Steele, looking around, appeared to see for the first time the evil looking miscreants who had come from the direction of the Thames and. striding toward them, asked brusquely for a light. One of the fellows thus unceremoniously addressed had actually begun to feel in his shabby garments for the article required when his companion uttered a short derisory

John Steele's heavy stick rang hard. The way before him cleared. But close behind now the others came fast. His door, however, was near. Now he reached it, fitted the heavy key. Had "Seemed specially taken by the re have been brought to a speedy concluports of the old trials you have on the sion, but as it was the key stuck. The lection of causes celebres! he kept re- ing fell upon Steele, but soon drew

marking. 'I suppose your master back. One of them, unable to repress makes much of them.' He would have a groan, held his hand to a broken wrist, while from his helpless fingers a knife dropped to the ground.

A ponderous, hulking fellow about

hair and a thick hanging lip, cursed loudly. Obviously this one of his assailants possessed immense, unusual strength. "Let me at him, ye!" he cried in foul

and flash tongue, when John Steele suddenly called him by name, said something in that selfsame dialect of pick purses and their ilk. The ruffian "How the- Who"- the man began.

"Call off your fellows!" John Steele's voice seemed to thrill. "I want to talk with you. It'll be more worth your while than any prigging or bagging you've ever yet done."

"Well, I'm blowed!" Suspicion he should say he was a client of gleamed from the bloodshot eyes. "And you want to talk with me? Here's a gamey cove!"

"I tell you I must talk with you! I've got a lay better than hooking you for the dock. As for the others, they

"Oh, they can!" The big man's face expressed varying feelings-vague wonder. At the same time he began to edge cautiously away. "That would be a nice plant, wouldn't it? Let's out voluminous heap. Here and there on of this, blokies," suddenly. "This cove

"Wait!" Steele stepped forward. "I ant you, Tom Rogers, and I'm goin to have you. It'll be quids in your pocket and not Newgate." "Slope for it, mates!" The big man's

voice rang out. Around the corner in the direction of the Thames the burly figure of a policeman appeared in the dim light. "That's his little game!" and turned.

But John Steele sprang savagely forward, "You fool! You'll not get away so easily!" he exclaimed when one of the others put out a foot. It tripped him. John Steele's head struck the curb violently.

For some moments he lay still; then he made out the face of a policeman bending over him.

"That was a nasty fall you got, sir.' "Fall?" John Steele arose, stood swaying. "That man must not escape. Do you hear-must not?" As he spoke he made as if to rush forward. The other laid steadying fingers

on his arm. "Hold hard a bit, sir," he said. "Not quite yourself. Besides, they're well out of sight now. No use running

after." Steele moved, grasped the railing leading up the front step. His brow throbbed; a thousand darting pains shot through his brain. But for the moment these physical pangs were as nothing. Disappointment, self reproach, moved him. To have allowed himself to go down like that-to have been caught by such a simple trick! Clumsy clod! And at a moment

"Pardon me, sir," the officer said in a brisker tone, "but hadn't we better go in? This, I take it, is your house. You can look after yourself somewhat and afterward describe your assailants; then we'll start out to find and arrest them, if possible."

Steele loosened his hold on the railing. He appeared now to have recovered his strength. "That's just what I don't want you to do. My name is John Steele. You know of me?" And as the other returned a respectful affirmative, "It is my desire to escape any notoriety in this little matter, you understand?" Something passed from his hand to the policeman's.

Walking quickly up the steps, John Steele opened the door, murmured a perfunctory "Good night" and let himself in. But as he mounted to his chambers some of the moment's exultation that had seized him at sight of the man revived. "He has come back. He is here-in

London. I surely can lay hands on him. I must! I will!"

> CHAPTER IX. A CHANGE OF FRONT.

TTE found the task no easy one, however, although he went at it with his characteristic vigor and energy. Few men knew the seamy side of London better than John Steele-its darksome streets and foul alleys, its hovels and various habitations. And this knowledge he utilized to the best advantage, always it turned as usual the episode would to find that his efforts came to naught. Reluctantly John Steele concluded that the man he sought had made his shelves, sir. 'What an interesting col- foremost of those who had been trail- way out of London; otherwise the faciltties at his command were such that

ne should most likely ere this have

been able to attain his end-find what

he desired. Soberly attired, he attract-

ed no very marked attention in the

slums, breeding spots of the criminal

classes. The denizens knew John Steele. He had been there oft before. He had on occasion assisted some of them with stern good advice or more substantial services. He was acquainted with these men and women, had perhaps a larger charity for them than most people find it expedient to cherish. One man had seen the object of Steele's solicitude, and to this person, t weazened little "undesirable." the

London was pretty hot and he thought of decamping from it. "'Arter all this time that's gone by,' he says to me, bitter like, 'to think a man can't come back to 'is native 'ome without being spied on for what ought long ago to be dead and forgot!" "

red headed giant had confided that

"What brought him to London?" "I expect it was 'omesickness, sir. 'E's been a bad lot, but 'e has a 'eart, arter all. It was to see 'is mother 'e came back; the old woman drew 'im 'ere. You see, 'e had written 'er from foreign parts, but could never 'ear 'cause she had moved. Used to keep a place where a woman was found"-"Dead?"

"Murdered!" said the man. John Steele was silent. "And she, 'is mother, 'ad gone, 'aving saved a bit, out into a peaceable-like little 'amlet, where there weren't no bobbies, only instead lits of flower gardens and bright bloomin' daffy-down-dillies. But, blime me, when Tom come and found out where she 'ad changed to if she 'adn't gone and shuffled off, and all 'e 'ad for 'Is pains was the sight of a

mound in the churchyard." "Yes; she's buried," said John Steele thoughtfully, "and all she might have

told about the woman who was-murdered is buried with her." "But she did tell, sir, at the time,"

quickly, "of the trial." "True." The visitor's tone changed. "If you can find Tom give him this note. You'll be well paid"-

"I ain't askin' for that. You got me off easy once and gave me a lift arter I was let out"-"Well, well!" Steele made a brusque

gesture. "We all need a helping hand sometimes," he said, turning away, And that was as near as he had come to attainment of his desires.

Summer passed. Sometimes, the better to think, to plan, to keep himself girded by constant exercise, he repaired to the park, now neglected by fashion and given over to that nebulous quantity of diverse qualities called the people.

"How do you do, Steele? Just the man I wanted to see!"

Near the main exit toward which John Steele had unconsciously stepped the sound of a familiar voice and the appearance of a well known stocky form broke in with startling abruptness on the dark train of thought.

"Deep in some point of law?" went on Sir Charles. "'Pon honor, believe you would have cut me. However, don't apologize; you're forgiven!" "Most amiable of you to say so, Sir Charles!" perfunctorily.

"Not at all! Especially as our meeting is quite apropos. Obliged to run up to town on a little matter of business; but, thank goodness, it's done. Never saw London more deserted. Dined at the club, nobody there, Supped at the hotel, dining room empty. Strolled up Piccadilly, not a soul to be seen. That is," he added, "no one whom one has seen before, which is the same thing. But how did you enjoy your trip to the continent?" "It was not exactly a trip for pleas-

ure," returned the other, with a slight accent of constraint. "Ah, yes; so I understood. But fancy going to the continent on busi-

ness! One usually goes for-which reminds me, how would you like to go back into the country with me?" "I? It is impossible at the moment

But Sir Charles seemed not to listen.

"Deuced dull journey for a man to take alone, good deal of it by coach. You'll find a few salmon to kill, trout and all that. Think of the joy of whipping a stream after having been mewed up all these months in the musty metropolis. Besides, I made a wager with Jocelyn you wouldn't refuse a second opportunity to bask in Arcadia." He laughed. "'I really couldn't presume to ask him again, is the way she expressed it, but if you can draw a sufficiently eloquent picture of the rural attractions of Strathorn to woo him from his beloved dusty byways you have my permission to try." - [To be Continued.]

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